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Governor



JAMES M. Le BLANC
Secretary

State of Louisiana
Department of Public Safety and Corrections

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For Immediate Release

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"Out4Life" Reentry Conference Slated for Shreveport
Partnerships, Solutions Sought to Reduce Recidivism

(Baton Rouge) With 15,000 offenders being released from state prisons and jails in Louisiana each year, every community faces challenges on how to deal with releasing offenders. They require supervision and need help finding jobs, finding places to live, and accessing substance abuse and/or mental health treatment. Can your community support those needs?

The **"Out4Life" Reentry Conference, scheduled for February 18 – 20, 2008 in Shreveport**, will explore the challenges offenders face when released from prison, challenges communities are faced with trying to deal with their return and what help is provided by state agencies to aid in successful reentry. The "lock 'em up and throw away the key" philosophy doesn't mirror reality because most offenders convicted of crime will eventually be released. Communities across Louisiana, including service and treatment providers, faith-based organizations and government agencies, must be prepared to support offenders or face a future with continued high incarceration rates, high incarceration costs, more crime and more victimization.

The Out4Life Reentry Conference is co-sponsored by the Louisiana Department of Public Safety and Corrections – Corrections Services and Prison Fellowship, the world's largest outreach to offenders and their families. **DPS&C Secretary James M. Leblanc** will give the Welcome Address beginning at **8:00 a.m. on Monday, February 18, 2008**. National and local speakers will address conference participants, including Prison Fellowship President and former Virginia Attorney General Mark Early, U.S. Department of Labor Deputy Director Scott Shortenhaus, DPS&C Assistant Secretary Whalen Gibbs and Louisiana State Penitentiary Warden Burl Cain.

"Successful offender reentry is the number one priority of my Department, aside from the obvious goal of public safety," said DPS&C Secretary James M. LeBlanc. "There are too many offenders who end up back in prison because services, treatment, and/or job opportunities are difficult to come by in their community. It's time for employers, community activists, faith-based organizations and government agencies to step up."

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Some of the conference workshops scheduled include discussions on contributions of the faith community, needs of female prisoners, funding reentry initiatives, and returning home to families and children for life.**

Successful offender reentry translates into less crime, less victimization, safer communities, reduced incarceration rates, and a significant savings to taxpayers.

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** See attached conference schedule.

"Out4Life" Reentry Conference

Louisiana Department of Public Safety and Corrections
Prison Fellowship

February 18 – 20, 2008

Shreveport Convention Center
400 Caddo St